

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 MCE-00 ACDA-12 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/110 W

-----029632 100051Z /21

R 090812Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4760
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS RABAT 1416

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, MO
SUBJ: US ARMS FOR MOROCCO - PRESS COMMENT

1. SUMMARY. MOROCCAN PRESS OF LEFT CONTINUES TO COMMENT
IN GUARDED FASHION ON REPORTED POSTPONEMENT OF DECISION ON U.S.
ARMS SALES TO MOROCCO. AS OF MARCH 8, ISTIQLAL PRESS, WHICH
SUPPORTS GOM POSITION HAS ADDED ITS VIEW THAT GOM MIGHT BE
WELL ADVISED TO SEEK ALTERNATE SOURCES. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESS OF THE MOROCCAN LEFT CONTINUES TO COMMENT IN
MOST CIRCUMSPECT MANNER ON REPORTS ON STATUS OF ARMS
SALES, TAKING CARE TO CITE SOURCES IN EVERY INSTANCE.
SOCIALST MUHARRIR OF MARCH 8 REPRINTS PROVOCATIVE
NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR ARTICLE WHICH STATES, INTER
ALIA, THAT BOUMEDIENNE WAS "DISAPPOINTED" IN HIS RE-
QUEST TO MOSCOW FOR SAM MISSILES FOR THE POLISARIO
FRONT BECAUSE MOSCOW DID NOT WANT TO JEOPARDIZE
IMPENDING COMMERICAL AGREEMENTS WITH MOROCCO, WHILE
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CONGRESS "REFUSED" TO APPROVE THE MOROCCAN
ARMS REQUEST. ARTICLE IS REPRINTED WITHOUT FURTHER
COMMENT. PREVIOUS DAY, MUHARRIR DREW FROM LONDON-
BASED ARABIC LANGUAGE PERIODICAL AL MANAR, ALSO
WITHOUT COMMENT, AL MANAR STATED THAT ARMS REQUEST
HAD BEEN "POSTPONED OR DENIED," AND LINKED POST-
PONEMENT OF KING'S SCHEDULED DECEMBER VISIT TO

U.S. TO PERCEIVED PRO-ALGERIAN U.S. POLICY STANCE.
ARTICLE SUGGESTED THAT MOROCCO WOULD LIKELY TURN
TO FRANCE FOR ARMS IF U.S. REQUEST TURNED DOWN.

3. COMMUNIST P.P.S. DAILY AL BAYANE QUOTED FROM
ALGIERS ASH SHAAB ARTICLE STATING THE "U.S.
HAD WARNED MOROCCO NOT TO USE AMERICAN ARMS TO
SHOOT AT ALGERIANS." THOSE "PRO-AMERICAN" MEMBERS
OF THE MOROCCAN ADMINISTRATION SHOULD TAKE A LESSON
FROM THIS, COMMENTS AL BAYANE, AND DETERMINE WHO
THEIR REAL FRIENDS ARE.

4. ON PRO-GOVERNMENT SIDE, ISTIQLAL'S AL ALAM COMMENTS
IN FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ON IMMINENT DEPARTURE OF P.M.
OSMAN FOR MOSCOW. OSMAN SHOULD CONSIDER ADDING
ARMS DISCUSSIONS TO THE COMMERICAL DEALS HE IS
SCHEDULED TO SIGN IN THE SOVIET CAPITAL, SAYS
AL ALAM, BECAUSE THE POSITION OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS
ON ARMS SALES IS "UNCLEAR." ANDERSON

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